United Nations A/C.3/61/SR.5

# General Assembly
Sixty-first session

Official Records

Distr.: General
19 October 2006

Original: English

## Third Committee

**Summary record of the 5th meeting**
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 4 October, at 3 p.m.

*Chairman*: Mr. Ballesteros (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Costa Rica)
*later*: Mr. Al Bayati ..... (Iraq)

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* Items which the Committee has decided to consider together.

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06-55347 (E)

*In the absence of Mr. Al Bayati (Iraq), Mr. Ballesteros (Costa Rica), Vice Chairman, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.*

**Agenda item 98: Crime prevention and criminal justice** (A/61/96, 135, 178, 179 and 284; A/C.3/61/L.2 and L.3)

**Agenda item 99: International drug control** (A/61/208-S/2006/598 and A/61/221)

1. **Mr. Laborde** (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)), introducing the item and speaking as the Chief of the Terrorism Prevention Branch on behalf of the UNODC Executive Director, said that the situation in regard to global efforts to control drugs and prevent crime was not good. The threat posed by transnational and non-State actors involved in drugs and crime was one of the greatest challenges to national security and international peace. Aware of their inability to act alone to combat those threats, States had adopted multilateral instruments, but the instruments were only as good as their implementation.

2. Containing threats required an integrated and comprehensive approach. The mandate review triggered by the 2005 World Summit was laudable. The work of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice would be enhanced by strengthening the respective conferences of the States parties established pursuant to the Conventions against Corruption and against Transnational Organized Crime. The Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted by the General Assembly in September 2006, in which Member States had resolved to strengthen coordination in combating terrorism-related crimes, was encouraging.

3. Coherence involved ratification of the relevant instruments on crime prevention, implementation of those instruments, monitoring and evaluation. If States lacked the capacity to honour commitments, UNODC could provide legal and technical assistance. Since many of the instruments were quite recent, they lacked adequate implementation-review mechanisms. States had to hold each other accountable and provide information. A lack of information hampered the ability of UNODC to analyse the crime situation and study links between drugs, crime and terrorism. UNODC was an important source of information on international crime, the international drug trade and, more recently, global patterns of trafficking in persons and drug cultivation. The Office also helped States to draw lessons from the successful experiences of others. For example, one month earlier, the Office had issued a report on Sweden's successful drug-control policy. Similar reports on other countries were planned.

4. It was important to prevent duplication within the United Nations by engaging in joint efforts. UNODC had contributed its expertise to peacekeeping and peacebuilding, for example, in Afghanistan, Haiti and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. That area of activity for UNODC was expected to increase, and there was a possibility that the Office would soon get involved in Iraq and the Sudan.

5. Greater coordination was also important in the provision of technical assistance and development assistance. UNODC had been helping to build relationships between donors and regions in need of assistance to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and fight drug abuse, crime and corruption.

6. Since transnational threats by definition did not respect borders, greater regional cooperation was required. UNODC had launched regional initiatives in the Gulf States and Central Asia to improve intelligence sharing and practical cooperation among law-enforcement agencies and had held meetings at the regional level in West and Central Africa. In Asia, UNODC supported a programme to reduce drug problems and had worked to facilitate the Paris Pact on combating Afghan heroin (A/61/221, para. 20).

7. UNODC was finalizing a strategy document on security and justice for all which stressed the need for an integrated approach to protecting the world from drugs, crime and terrorism. To implement the strategy would require more stable and predictable resources and greater coherence between Member State priorities and available resources.

8. **Mr. Ali** (Sudan) requested further information on the areas and projects on which UNODC and the African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders were collaborating.

9. It was important to ensure that the strategy on crime and drugs was comprehensive and included social development. The report on international crime which UNODC intended to publish would be eagerly

awaited. The report on drugs had been helpful in national and international policy formation.

10. **Mr. Rosengren** (Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania; the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia; and, in addition, Iceland, Norway the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said he wondered what intersectoral coordination methods were best suited to crime prevention and international drug control.

11. **Ms. Feller** (Mexico) expressed concern about the effects of drug trafficking on transit countries, which was increasingly an issue in her region. She requested further information on what UNODC was doing in that area.

12. **Mr. Alakhder** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) asked how likely it was that UNODC would reach its goals, given the limited resources at its disposal, and whether there was a way to ensure adequate resources. He also wished to know what strategies UNODC had developed for operating in the difficult conditions common in "hot spots" such as the Sudan.

13. **Ms. Assoumou** (Côte d'Ivoire) said she wished to hear more on the plans to curb African immigration into Europe.

14. **Mr. Llanos** (Chile) stressed the importance of regional cooperation and wanted to know if there were examples of Latin American cooperation on questions other than terrorism, such as drugs.

15. **Mr. Cumberbach Miguén** (Cuba) said he shared the Libyan representative's concern regarding UNODC resources and expressed the hope that regular resources for the Office would increase, since voluntary funding sources might distort the agenda. He desired clarification on how the proposed report on the Caribbean would be compiled, and wondered specifically whether the Office would request reports from each country. There was a great diversity of countries in the region, so it was important to hear from all of them. Further, he wished to hear how unilateral actions impeded the work of UNODC, given the fact that action by one State alone could not appropriately address the issues.

16. **Mr. Laborde** (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime), replying to the question from the representative of Cuba, said that the report on the Caribbean would be the outcome of close cooperation with States. Very often States were dismayed when asked for yet another report from the Secretariat; therefore a balance needed to be struck. Sovereign States obviously wished to have their say, but occasionally the Secretariat, and UNODC as an integral part of the Secretariat, needed to take the initiative, look at new possibilities and submit them to Member States so that each could make an input into an official document.

17. Turning to the question from the representative of the Sudan, he said that the African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders was a pillar of United Nations efforts in crime prevention and criminal justice and provided the bases for research and statistics, an example being the round table on the African region held in Abuja in September 2005. The regional approach was an important link in global efforts, and UNODC was paying close attention to cooperation with the Institute. Regarding the causes of crime and drug use, great attention was being given to preventive action, for instance in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy recently adopted by the General Assembly.

18. Regarding the cross-cutting approach to crime prevention and international drug control advocated by the representative of Finland, he said that the European Union was a laboratory of cooperation in that regard, and UNODC did have the relevant expertise. At the global level, however, the stakes were higher and international cooperation posed a much broader challenge. In the past, States had been protected by their borders; but international criminal organizations had no borders, while legal systems did indeed have borders. States needed help in that area and various UNODC units were cooperating with one another to address crime, drugs and terrorism from various angles.

19. Replying to the question from the representative of Mexico, he said the concept of transit revolved around defining crime and drug routes, an area in which there was need for greater consistency among justice systems and more coherence among law-enforcement agencies. UNODC had helped the Central Asian States to create a special subregional agency to exchange information. Prevention plans also needed to be multidisciplinary and multinational.

20. Turning to the question from the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, he said UNODC needed to confront its challenges with the resources at its disposal and endeavoured to establish priorities. While it lacked the resources to respond to current levels of threat, it attempted to deal with the most difficult issues, eliminating the superfluous. Despite valuable support from donors, UNODC did feel frustrated when it saw the regular budgets of other United Nations agencies consistently increased while that of UNODC was not. Yet it was able, in partnership, to provide assistance for harmonization of national legislation and advice on subregional counter-terrorism actions.

21. Replying to the question from the representative of Côte d'Ivoire, he said the issue was not one of migration between Africa and Europe, but of trafficking in persons. The Office's contribution was to reduce the threat of such trafficking and dismantle its networks.

22. In response to the remark by the representative of Chile, he said that, in addition to working with the anti-terrorism bodies of the Organization of American States (OAS), UNODC also held meetings with heads of drug-control agencies in the region and collaborated with the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD). Unilateral State action did not make the work of UNODC harder, because the countries were heavily involved in multilateral efforts, especially the Conventions against Transnational Organized Crime and Corruption.

23. *Mr. Al Bayati (Iraq), Chairman, took the Chair.*

24. **Mr. Reddy** (India) asked about UNODC's thinking on the future of the alternative-development experiment, which had faltered, especially in the light of other areas where it had been successful in the past.

25. **Mr. Babadoudou** (Benin) said it was no secret who manufactured drug precursors. He suspected a measure of hypocrisy on the part of States and the international community and a lack of political will. Or perhaps States were simply unable to act because of the well-known links between the mafia and politics in some countries. Did that not pose a problem for UNODC?

26. **Mr. Saeed** (Sudan) said that, while he welcomed the efforts made by UNODC, it should not exceed its mandate. While the Committee was not the place to discuss a transfer of peacekeeping operations from the African Union to the United Nations, he did not wish to see UNODC used as a political tool against his country. He requested that the reference to UNODC's possible intervention in Iraq and the Sudan, which was certainly outside its remit, should be deleted from the report.

27. **Mr. Aksen** (Turkey) said that, since the Paris Pact initiative would shortly come to an end, he would like to be informed about the negotiations that had apparently taken place within UNODC regarding its extension.

28. **Mr. Stelzer** (Austria) said that, given UNODC's shortage of funds, a three-fold effort was required: to raise additional funds, to focus UNODC's mandate, and to increase its delivery capacity. While the drug pillar was still the largest, the crime pillar had grown in recent years and within it the terrorism pillar, reflecting the urgency for action. It was necessary to identify links between drugs and crime issues and between the two relevant treaty bodies in order to strengthen their policymaking role and enable the Secretariat to receive better policy guidance. Also, every organization needed from time to time to redefine its own comparative advantage and determine where a niche for added value existed. He asked the Chief of the Terrorism Prevention Branch, whether he had had time to develop a response to the recently adopted Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which contained many references to UNODC, and how UNODC would assume a clearer mandate so as better to respond.

29. **Mr. Laborde** (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime), replying to the question from the representative of Benin regarding a lack of political will, said it was a matter for Member States to determine what was most useful. He saw no link between national policies and mafia influence. The fight against drugs, crime and terrorism involved issues of security which did not necessarily form part of development issues. It was no accident that, of the issues on which UNODC had worked in the past, drugs had received most attention; however, crime and terrorism had emerged more strongly in recent years.

30. Regarding the question from the representative of the Sudan, UNODC merely responded to requests from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) to provide expertise on a particular subject. Its role as an integral part of the Secretariat was to provide that

expertise but with every precaution. Naturally, the decision rested with the States concerned.

31. Replying to the question from the representative of Turkey, he said the Paris Pact initiative had been followed by the Moscow Declaration of June 2006 (A/61/208, annex), and a series of round tables on operational expertise had been held, as well as many meetings in Vienna on border-control policies, anti-trafficking measures and trafficking routes. The Moscow Declaration would enable that work to continue and more bilateral exchanges would also be useful.

32. Concerning the question from the representative of Austria, work was continuing on implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. It was not for UNODC to upgrade its mandates. It had received a clear mandate from the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Its role was to provide technical assistance for the ratification and implementation of international instruments. Although the Terrorism Prevention Branch was the most visible body, there was also the Global Programme against Money-Laundering and all that it entailed for the financing of terrorism, and the newly established Rule of Law Section, which helped strengthen criminal-justice systems when necessary. The idea was to bring all those elements together and submit a document to the Secretary-General so that the issue could be more coherently addressed. It must be borne in mind, however, that policy issues concerning terrorism were dealt with by the Security Council, especially the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Al-Qaida and Taliban Sanctions Committee, which possessed the operational monitoring capacity.

33. **Mr. Ali** (Sudan) said that the UNODC mandate was very clear. The Office had nothing to do with peacekeeping operations. The Committee was not the appropriate forum to discuss the issue of a transition of peacekeeping operations from the African Union to the United Nations, which his Government had completely rejected. His delegation had full confidence in the good faith of the Office and did not wish to see its being used as a tool for exerting political pressure on his Government. He therefore took issue with the reference to the Sudan in the UNODC statement and requested its retraction.

34. **Mr. Al-Muqhim** (Saudi Arabia) would like to know what preventive measures were being taken by the Office to address the problem of drug abuse and drug-related crime.

35. **Mr. Laborde** (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) said that he would refer the matter raised by the Sudan to the Executive Director and respond to the Sudanese delegation's concerns as soon as possible.

36. Concerning prevention, the Office had adopted many measures on drug abuse, including the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction. The Office had also launched a number of public awareness campaigns and had worked with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other partners on educational matters as well as with the United Nations Development Programme on governance issues. It had also worked with the relevant agencies to address issues concerning children. UNODC had put in place several urban-crime-prevention projects and had established many standards and norms in the area of crime prevention. Furthermore, the new Rule of Law Section dealt particularly with crime-prevention issues.

37. **Mr. Cumberbach Miguén** (Cuba) said that the current discussion demonstrated yet again the degree to which peacekeeping operations were complex. It also showed that problems arose when vague notions which distorted mandates, however noble the intentions, were introduced. His delegation had pointed out the problem in other bodies and in other instances, for example with respect to humanitarian assistance. UNODC should take into account the concerns voiced by the Sudanese delegation about the reference to a matter which had yet to be decided upon by the Security Council. His delegation called on the Secretariat to be prudent when it addressed such sensitive matters.

38. **Mr. Rosengren** (Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania; the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia; and, in addition, Iceland, Norway, the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine, commended the work done by UNODC in enhancing preventive strategies, reforming criminal justice and combating transnational crime and corruption. He said that the European Union had

sought to ensure that preventive strategies formed an integral part of all anti-crime activities and that victims of crime were provided adequate support.

39. The European Union provided technical assistance to third countries in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice, including, inter alia, judicial reform, capacity-building for law-enforcement agencies and activities to combat terrorism. Operational and technical assistance activities must aim at ensuring the primacy of the rule of law and the principle of good governance. United Nations standards and norms had a significant role to play in global efforts to address crime-prevention and criminal-justice issues.

40. Transnational organized crime must be addressed in a global manner. The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the protocols thereto played a key role in reducing organized crime. The European Union called upon all States which had not done so to ratify or accede to the Convention and its protocols at the earliest possible date. It also encouraged all concerned to participate actively in the third session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

41. Trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants affected all parts of the world, as it involved source, transit and destination countries alike, or a mixture of the three. There was a need for increased prevention activities to limit the number of people at risk of becoming victims of those crimes in the source countries, to prevent criminals engaged in such activities from using territories for transit, and to eradicate demand for trafficked persons in the countries of destination. The European Union members as well as candidate countries had ratified or were in the process of ratifying the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime as well as the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Legislation, however, must be accompanied by an effective enforcement response and coordinated regional and international cooperation to prevent such offences.

42. Good governance was an integral part of achieving development, including the Millennium Development Goals. In many parts of the world, however, development efforts had been greatly hampered by corruption, a major factor contributing to poor governance. The European Commission had therefore adopted a communication in August 2006 to support good governance within the framework of the European Consensus on Development. As corruption also seriously undermined the rule of law, the European Union welcomed the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption to be held in December 2006.

43. The European Union reiterated its condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. There was no cause or grievance that could justify terrorist acts. The European Union commended the adoption of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which demonstrated the resolve of the General Assembly to unite in order to prevent and combat terrorism. The General Assembly should make every effort to reach an agreement on the comprehensive convention on international terrorism without further delay. All measures to combat terrorism must comply with international law. The European Union therefore noted with satisfaction that the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy included a clear legal framework for anti-terrorist activities, including human-rights, refugee and international humanitarian law. His delegation commended the valuable work done by the Terrorism Prevention Branch in promoting the implementation of the relevant counter-terrorism conventions and welcomed the establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force.

44. The European Union remained strongly committed to the international fight against illicit narcotic drugs and drug trafficking. The twentieth special session of the General Assembly rightly put the reduction of demand for drugs on the international agenda. As 2008 would mark 10 years since the special session, it would be an opportune moment to carry out a review of implementation of the commitments made.

45. UNODC had a leading role in international efforts to combat illicit narcotic drugs, including through its collection of data and research on the global drug situation. The European Union also appreciated the many important projects carried out by UNODC to combat the demand and supply of illicit drugs in different parts of the world.

46. **Mr. Kapoma** (Zambia), speaking on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), said that crime prevention, criminal justice and international drug control affected every country and were a priority for SADC. There had been significant progress with respect to the development of partnerships and training. For example, the Regional Institute for Strategic Studies had supported the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (SARPCO) in the implementation of the Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Materials in the Southern African Development Community Region; the Bamako Declaration; and Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. SARPCO had also organized several training courses in the area of violence against women and children, human rights, HIV/AIDS and other areas. The training courses had had an impact in reducing some crime in the region.

47. SADC continued to face challenges, however, with respect to the illegal possession of firearms, stock theft, violent crime, rape and sexual abuse of women and children, in which there had been an unprecedented upsurge. As the region's law-enforcement agencies needed to be equipped with the necessary skills to address such crime, his delegation called for continued international cooperation in strengthening their capacity.

48. SADC welcomed the work undertaken by UNODC in the area of transnational organized crime, corruption and counter-terrorism, as well as crime prevention and criminal justice. SADC particularly appreciated the strategic-partnership approach taken by UNODC and its assistance in developing a programme of action to enhance Africa's efforts to fight crime, drugs, insecurity and underdevelopment by mainstreaming the rule of law into the development agenda.

49. He welcomed the recently adopted Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and hoped that a related convention would soon be a reality. He also appreciated the technical assistance that UNODC provided, most recently through its Terrorism Prevention Branch. He commended the initiatives undertaken by the Global Programme against Money-Laundering, and, since it relied mainly on voluntary contributions, Member States should increase their resource allocations to that programme.

50. He applauded the achievements of the African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders in that area, and wished to see continued international cooperation to help the Institute carry out its objectives in the light of its financial constraints, which limited its ability to conduct country visits to assess needs and evaluate the impact of technical assistance offered to Member States.

51. Since the adoption of the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, in 1998, he was pleased to note the progress Member States had made towards implementing the goals set for 2008. However, more concerted efforts of the international community were needed in confronting and ultimately defeating the scourge of drug abuse. It was necessary not only to control the production and distribution of drugs, but to slow the pace of growth by reducing consumer demand.

52. SADC drug-control programmes had begun to focus on cannabis as a challenge requiring regional cooperation. Its Protocol on Combating Illicit Drugs was the guiding principle in drug-control activities in the region and its Drug Control Unit addressed a number of issues in that regard. He called upon SADC cooperating partners to help strengthen those programmes through contributions to its fund base.

53. He welcomed the recommendation contained in the report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation against the world drug problem, which stated that measures against drugs and crime should be included as essential components in strategies to achieve sustained economic development (A/61/221, para. 50 (a)). In that regard, drug-abuse-prevention programmes could be more cost-effective than treatment and rehabilitation programmes, and should be seen as part of an overall effort to raise the standard of health in societies and safeguard the social fabric.

54. **Mr. Fissenko** (Belarus), speaking on behalf of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), said that the United Nations had taken several important steps to address transnational crime and terrorism, including the adoption of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The Strategy strengthened the counter-terrorism capacity of States and set practical tasks for promoting dialogue among civilizations and religious tolerance.

55. CIS attached high priority to strengthening cooperation to combat terrorism. It had adopted a number of instruments and carried out joint activities for that purpose, such as annual joint counter-terrorism exercises among its law-enforcement agencies. It supported the efforts of UNODC to increase the number of parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols, as well as UNODC assistance to Member States for the full implementation of those instruments at the national level. His delegation hoped that the third session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention would help to translate the internationally agreed standards into effective measures against transnational organized crime.

56. CIS supported the main thrust of the UNODC report *Trafficking in Persons: Global Patterns*. UNODC should continue to prepare regular global reports and strengthen its cooperation with other international and regional organizations on countering the trafficking in persons. His delegation called on all delegations to support the draft resolution on improving coordination of efforts against slavery and trafficking in persons, which it would introduce to the Committee at a later date. Concerning migration, despite various processes and policies in the CIS region there were common problems which led members to cooperate in combating illegal migration, including the adoption of a plan of action for 2006-2008.

57. The members of CIS welcomed the entry into force of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. They were particularly concerned to see increased international cooperation on such issues as extradition, mutual legal assistance, joint investigations, the restitution of illegally exported assets and joint use of confiscated proceeds of crime. In the light of globalization, combating corruption was not possible without coordination of efforts against money-laundering. For that purpose, CIS was finalizing an agreement on money-laundering and the financing of terrorism.

58. The members of CIS called for the strengthening of UNODC, including its capacity for providing technical assistance in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice. They welcomed the efforts of UNODC in establishing constructive cooperation with international and regional organizations. CIS stood ready to contribute to the collective efforts of the international community to combat transnational crime and terrorism.

59. **Ms. Gendi** (Egypt) said that the work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) was evidence of the Organization's growing activities in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice, in which context the newly adopted United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was highly relevant. The Strategy was a crucial tool for rallying the international community into tackling terrorism from other than the conventional security angle. In short, it aimed to address the underlying causes of terrorism using a fresh approach that emphasized the importance of working together for radical solutions to the political problems of the day, in particular the end of occupation, which was a cause of sweeping violence. The essential requirement of non-involvement of States in terrorist activities or State terrorism was also highlighted in that approach. The Strategy was nonetheless only the beginning of a long road ahead towards strengthened cooperation against terrorism, in which connection all interests should be taken into account, without distinction among cultures or religions.

60. Among the first to draw attention to the globalization of terrorism, Egypt had adopted a raft of legislative and executive measures to combat the phenomenon and devoted special priority to fighting all forms of crime. It was host to the UNODC Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa and had organized numerous regional training seminars and workshops for skills — and capacity-building, in addition to international conferences relating to counter-terrorism.

61. Egypt had duly reported to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice concerning the proposed means of guaranteeing follow-up to the Bangkok Declaration, adopted by the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (General Assembly resolution 60/177). That welcome instrument reflected the collective responsibility to combat transnational organized crime, corruption and terrorism. Egypt had additionally made proposals designed to improve that follow-up. It would remain committed to the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction and to strengthening its efforts at the national level to fight drug abuse. On a related note, it had hosted a meeting

for the heads of drug-law-enforcement agencies in Africa, in which context she referred to indicators showing that drug trafficking could be reduced in the medium and long terms through such measures as the introduction of economic alternatives to drug cultivation and wider use of the electronic communication systems of the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) and the World Customs Organization (WCO). She affirmed Egypt's willingness to exchange information in the interest of strengthening the capacity to combat the dangerous scourge of drugs, in which connection she stressed the need similarly to strengthen the capacity of UNODC to fulfil its role.

62. **Mr. Schweich** (United States of America) said that no society was immune from international crime and drug operations, run by well-organized and well-financed groups which used cutting-edge technology and drew on each others' expertise and resources to run their international operations.

63. He drew attention to the growing link between drug trafficking and terrorism. While in most cases, drug traffickers and criminal groups tried to operate "below the public radar" and avoid confrontation with law enforcement, in others, they directly attacked Governments and in some cases took them over entirely. Those operations threatened the stability of States and regions, and were thus of concern not only to the Third Committee but to the Sixth Committee and the Security Council as well, and cut across the work of many United Nations agencies including UNODC and the DPKO.

64. The link between drug trafficking and terrorism could be most clearly seen in Colombia and Afghanistan, and had effects in other areas such as Pakistan and Myanmar.

65. In Colombia, after direct assault by terrorist groups funded by the drugs trade had brought the country to the verge of political and economic collapse in the 1990s, the situation had improved, with the support of the international community. Nevertheless, coca cultivation and cocaine production remained high, and terrorist groups, though weakened, continued their campaign of violence.

66. Afghanistan faced a greater challenge in curbing the power of traffickers and insurgency groups: the more than two decades of internal violence, followed by Taliban rule, had destroyed virtually all its institutional capacity. The drug trade was more deeply embedded in, and dominated, the Afghan economy, and the country's opium poppy cultivation had reached an all-time high that year. The main insurgency groups in the country shared an aggressive and extremist ideology which threatened not only the growth of democracy, but the stability of the region and the security of countries around the world. The Afghan Government had deployed efforts to respond to those challenges, with the support of the international community; the political and financial support of the international community would continue to be critical. He urged the Committee to support those efforts through extrabudgetary pledges to UNODC or bilaterally.

67. The trafficking in methamphetamine was a particular challenge in many parts of the world. Its properties and the fact that it was relatively inexpensive to produce, could easily be produced clandestinely, and was easily transportable posed a particular challenge to drug enforcement. The best way to control that trafficking was to prevent the diversion of the precursor chemicals used to produce it from legitimate commerce. In that regard, he urged States to be as forthcoming as possible in sharing vital data on international shipments to help identify and prevent diversion for illicit use, as under a recent resolution of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Also, his Government had recently passed an act to combat the methamphetamine epidemic and improve international control of the precursors.

68. The United Nations drug-control treaties were an essential legal framework, and attempts to broaden the supply or legalize drugs, even in good faith, undermined those treaties and imperiled the considerable progress achieved by the international community. Those attempts in fact encouraged the cultivation of illegal crops and put more money in the hands of criminals and drug traffickers.

69. He urged any State that had not yet done so to ratify the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols on trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling, and to move forward on implementation, and noted that the United States Government had recently approved the ratification of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Both conventions were key to combating international crime and he looked forward to their provisions becoming operational.

70. He underscored the important role that UNODC played in helping countries bring about institutional changes and combat international drugs and crime. He urged States to lend political and financial support to that Office's efforts. While the tools and political will to counter the international drug and criminal threats were there, greater resolve, innovation and cooperation were needed for measurable progress to be made in the near future.

71. **Mr. Hayee** (Pakistan) said that the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols, and the conventions on drug control and corruption provided a sufficient legal basis for joint international action against various aspects of organized crime. Nevertheless, as United Nations activities in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice had become more complex and multidimensional, universal adherence to those treaties and their faithful implementation remained an imperative. Member States needed to strengthen and further pursue collaborative action against terrorism, drug control, organized crime and corruption, bearing in mind that poverty was the root cause of all crimes.

72. Over the past seven years, the Government of Pakistan had taken a number of important steps to strengthen its criminal justice apparatus. It was in the process of ratifying the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Convention against Corruption, and had taken a series of measures to criminalize and punish transnational crime-related offences through its units to counter trafficking in persons and cyber-crime and the upgrading of its capacities in line with the standards of the inter-governmental Financial Action Task Force. Also, the National Accountability Bureau had achieved significant success in curbing high-level corruption and had recovered billions of rupees in illegally obtained money. The Bureau had organized an Integrity Retreat to sensitize government ministers and high-level officials to the negative social and economic impact of corruption. In collaboration with the Asian Development Bank, it had launched an access-to-justice programme designed to reform the criminal justice, prosecutorial, judicial and prison systems and to make the police force more accountable and responsive. Pakistan's Anti-Narcotics Force had played a critical role in turning Pakistan into a poppy-free country and had intercepted tons of heroin and other drugs bound for Europe and North America. Pakistan had played a leading role in sensitizing the international community to the drug problem in its region and had bolstered international efforts to stop the outflow of drugs and the inflow of precursor chemicals in that part of the world.

73. The war against terrorism did not merely involve curbing terrorists' ability to strike, but also the elimination of all the underlying factors which produced and sustained terrorists. In that regard, the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy recently adopted by the General Assembly had been an important step, and needed to be enlarged and adapted to that end.

74. Terrorism, a global threat, warranted a concerted and comprehensive international response. In that regard the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime played a central role in promoting universal accession to sectoral conventions on terrorism and to crime-related legal instruments. That Office's role could be further enhanced by helping States in sharing best practices and in the review and revision of national legislation and making available the resources required to counter all forms of transnational organized crime. The Office should take into account the political specificities of States and regions in helping them to improve their legal structures in compliance with their obligations under the relevant conventions.

75. **Mr. Saeed** (Sudan) said that the noticeable increase of the past decade in United Nations activities in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice was a move that would further national capacity-building in the elaboration of plans for crime prevention. More effective international efforts were needed, however, to limit the damaging impact of crime and its consequences for peace and security, as well as for development and reconstruction. In that regard, he stressed that such efforts should remain compatible with the Charter of the United Nations and international law and also fully respect the sovereignty of States.

76. The Sudan was endeavouring to enforce regional and international instruments on cooperation in matters of crime, money-laundering, trafficking in human beings and transnational organized crime. It also fully cooperated with the various initiatives of the African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, for which greater capacity-building and resources were needed to ensure the delivery of its services to the countries in the region.

77. Although the Sudan was among the few countries with no serious drug problem, its territory had been turned into a transit zone for drug-smuggling. As part of its ongoing work to combat that situation, it had enacted legislation and run awareness campaigns in conjunction with organizations involving young people, students, women and civil society. Regional cooperation had also been strengthened as a proactive measure against any potential drug threat. At the wider level, the key to meeting the challenges created by a rapidly changing and globalizing world lay in well-coordinated action of a more far-reaching nature and delivery of the technical assistance needed for countries to assume their responsibilities and implement their plans.

78. **Mr. Chowdhury** (Bangladesh) said that the rapid growth of crime and its new manifestations posed various challenges to the well-being of societies, especially to developing countries, which lacked the resources to access new technologies to fight that scourge. There was thus an increasing need for identifying appropriate technical assistance and mechanisms in order to maximize the collective capacity to fight global crime.

79. The Government was undertaking reforms to its criminal justice system and enhancing affordable justice for the poor through a series of laws.

80. Concerted efforts were required to counter transnational crime, which was often interconnected with a range of criminal activities and posed a serious threat to development, peace and security. In its unflinching commitment to fighting such crime, his country not only supported international and regional efforts, but had also taken legislative and other measures to clamp down on such activities. Its Independent Anti-Corruption Commission investigated offences under the Anti-Corruption Act and could initiate an investigation into any report of malpractice. It also instilled public awareness on its role through seminars, symposiums and workshops. His Government was establishing a national human rights commission and an independent public prosecution service, and was in the process of separating the judiciary from the executive.

81. His Government condemned terrorism in all its forms and remained committed to putting an end to terrorism on all fronts and eradicating its root causes. Bangladesh had ratified 12 United Nations conventions on terrorism and was a party to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism. It had also enacted the Money Laundering Prevention Act in 2002, in line with the Political Declaration adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly. The Government had ratified the SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution in 2002, as well as the three major United Nations drug conventions and the SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. It had also concluded a number of bilateral agreements and memorandums of understanding with a view to banning drug trafficking and the diversion of precursor chemicals, and stood ready to further its cooperation with Member States and international organizations.

82. Bangladeshi law imposed strict penalties on drug offenders, and a number of laws had been enacted to counter drug trafficking and the local drug trade, including the Narcotics Control Act of 2000, which incorporated the relevant provisions of the 1988 United Nations Convention against the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and limiting the period of drug-case investigations, and the Narcotic Control (Amendment) Act, 2004, which redefined "alcohol". Imports of raw opium had been banned since 1984 and cannabis cultivation had been prohibited in 1987, followed by a complete ban on the storage, distribution, sale and consumption of cannabis in 1989. Those sanctions were reinforced by the Narcotics Control Act 1990, as amended, which now deemed psychotropic substances a controlled drug.

83. He urged the United Nations to deepen its regional partnership and to provide funding and technical cooperation to developing countries in order to combat the global threat of organized crime and drug abuse.

84. **Ms. Blum** (Colombia) said that global results in implementing the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction indicated that the scourge of illicit drugs remained unresolved. The political will of States was not enough; more coordinated and effective action was needed on both the supply and the demand side based on the principle of shared responsibility.

85. Colombia had made tremendous efforts towards reducing the production of illicit drugs: it had

strengthened legislation on drug trafficking and the judicial procedures to seize illegal wealth, and had implemented extradition treaties, a fundamental part of judicial cooperation.

86. For the third consecutive year, Colombia was the country that had seized the most cocaine in the world, and, as the 2006 *World Drug Report* of UNODC had indicated, areas where coca was grown in the country had substantially decreased compared to 2000. *Plan Colombia*, funded nationally and with assistance from the United States and other countries, had made it possible to eradicate illegal crops over vast expanses of land. A fundamental component in the strategy had been alternative development. Nevertheless, more efforts were needed. Colombia would continue to adopt the measures needed to ensure greater effectiveness of its strategy, but also required greater commitment from the international community.

87. States needed to develop more effective actions to strengthen judicial cooperation against drug trafficking and related crimes such as money-laundering and the arms trade, to ensure effective control of chemical precursors, guarantee market access to products coming from alternative-development programmes, efficiently tackle the manufacturing of amphetamines and synthetic drugs, and continue to strengthen international action to prevent and reduce consumption. It was also important that UNODC should work with Governments to ensure harmonized national policies.

88. The trafficking of persons also required greater international cooperation in order to dismantle trafficker networks and punish those responsible. In 2005 the Colombian Government had established an institutional framework to take action against that crime and had created a national strategy against the trafficking in persons, which included preventive and judicial actions and provided for international cooperation and assistance to victims. UNODC had made important recommendations throughout that process.

89. Colombia had promoted consideration of the issue of kidnapping in the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. Countries needed to ensure that they would take measures to pursue and punish the perpetrators. Colombia had co-financed and participated in the drafting of the UNODC *Counter-Kidnapping Manual*, and hoped that the General Assembly would adopt draft resolution A/C.3/61/L.3 on that issue. She noted that progress had been made in Colombia in that regard, through its democratic security and defence policy, which had helped to substantially reduce extortive kidnapping. That policy had also made it possible to develop long-term strategies against terrorism, drug trafficking and related crimes. Significant steps had been taken to strengthen the criminal-justice system, crime rates had dropped, and more than 40,000 members of violent self-defence and guerrilla groups had been demobilized in the past four years.

90. Drug trafficking, corruption, trafficking in persons and in arms and terrorism required a comprehensive international focus. In that regard, the General Assembly and the United Nations agencies dealing with drugs and crime had a primary role to play in addressing those threats.

*The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.*